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ABSTRACT

This teacher training monograph deals with value orientations of cultures in general with specific reference to Vietnamese culture. The first two sections discuss the conceptual issues of value orientation and give axiological definitions of the six clusters used to describe cultural orientation. The third section introduces the section on Vietnamese culture by giving a brief history of Vietnam. Section IV takes each of the six value orientations defined in the first sections (nature, self, society, the supernatural, human nature, and the family) as well as some axiological sub-sections and defines them in the context of Vietnamese culture. Included are some folk tales and poems to illustrate certain Vietnamese cultural beliefs. The appendix consists of a very brief outline of U.S. value orientations in the same six categories. This is followed by an annotated bibliography, largely on Vietnamese cultural issues. (CG)

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VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF VIETNAMESE CULTURE

CULTURAL MONOGRAPH NUMBER 3

BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL
EDUCATION TRAINING PROJECT
FOR SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS
AND GUIDANCE COUNSELORS

University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611
June 1983

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I. INTRODUCTION TO THE CULTURAL MONOGRAPH SERIES AND TO CULTURAL VALUE ORIENTATIONS

The Cultural Monograph Series provides the reader with an overview of varying cultures. This overview is presented from the perspective of value orientations. It should be pointed out that any attempt to describe a culture or a subculture is at best dangerous. Culture is not static, it is an evolving phenomenon, subject to continuous change. The study of culture and of cross cultural inquiry is an emergent field of endeavor.

The material persented in the Culture Monograph Series is based on A Conceptualization of Value Orientations and on the corresponding Axiological Definitions, developed at the University of Florida by Dr. Clemens L. Hallman (1981). The material includes cultural and cross cultural research conducted in the United States and in Latin America. An understanding of A Conceptualization of Value Orientations and of the corresponding Axiological Definitions is requisite to an understanding of the material presented in all the cultural monographs in the series. The following section provides the reader with an overview of the aforementioned conceptual schemes.

CONCEPTUAL SCHEMES

As one grows up one takes one's cultural patterns of behavior for granted. It's the "natural" thing to do. Because of this phenomenon it is hard to understand why people from another culture behave so differently. One does not realize that a person from another culture is behaving according to his/her cultural patterns of behavior. Culture as defined here means: the learned patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving that make life meaningful for a particular group of human beings. The implications of such a definition are as follows:

A. Cultural patterns of behavior are learned.

B. We are usually not aware of the fact that our behavior is learned, or of the reasons why we behave the way we do. Our culture is natural for us--we learn our unique patterns of behavior based on our personal experience: from our parents, friends, community, i.e., our "environment".

C. This means that people the world over have learned how to behave, to think, and to feel, largely by those surrounding them, by their native environment.

D. Growing up in a particular place, learning the patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving expected by people in the group, often means that we think of other people, apart from our "own", as different, often somewhat strange. This is especially true if they look different, i.e., color, size, if they behave differently from us and if they speak a different language.

E. Much of our prejudice, our bias towards others, is based on the "cultural shell" which surrounds and nurtures us from birth. From our environment we learn our attitudes towards others and our feelings toward certain types of people. When someone looks or behaves differently from us, we tend to judge him/her from our vantage point. We usually do not stop and think "Well, maybe he/she is behaving in a certain way because he/she is coming from a different 'cultural shell' than mine."

F. The above considerations point to the fact that no one is better than the other, that no one is right and everyone else is wrong. Our behavior is largely determined by the process of socialization that we have undergone through our native culture. Our environment has not only led us, but has constrained us, in terms of what we believe is right, what we believe is true, what we believe is valuable, and what we believe is wrong.

G. EVERY CULTURE IS VALID, because it serves the purpose of making life meaningful for a particular group. Every person, thus, has dignity and worth as an individual, and as a member of a particular group, whether that group be Mexican, French, Chinese, Cuban, Egyptian, American, Jamaican or any other.

Condon and Yousef (1979) developed six clusters of cultural values which they feel are common to all cultures. Basically, the clusters reflect solutions which a culture provides for solving human problems. These six clusters defined below, are an expansion of the five clusters developed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961).

1. NATURE: The value placed on the degree to which natural occurrences determine thought and activity. Orientation to time - future, present, past - is also included here.

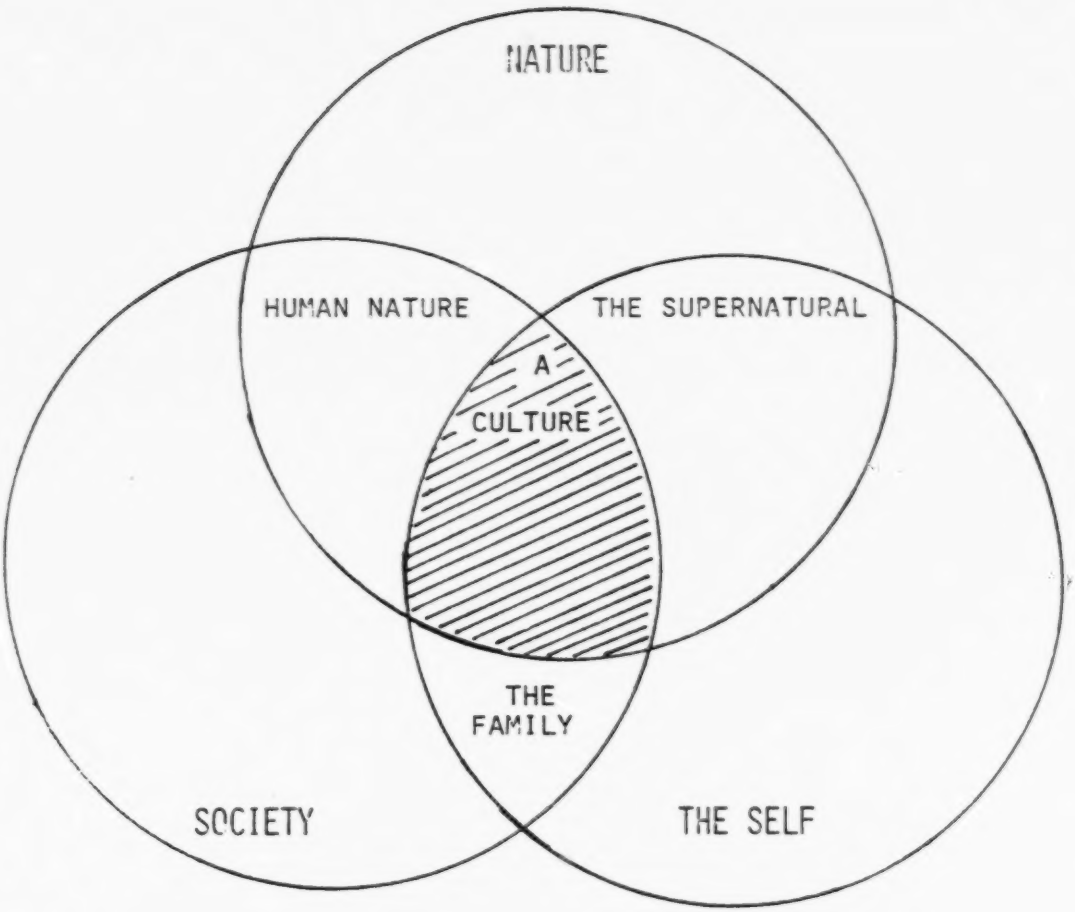
2. THE SELF: The value placed on one's own being and worth as an individual in a particular age group, sex, and activity.

3. SOCIETY: The value placed on the degree to which individuals feel responsible to participate in societal interaction.

4. THE SUPERNATURAL: The value placed on the degree of influence on control of a power greater than human power.

5. HUMAN NATURE: The value placed on the degree of innate reasoning ability, goodness, search for happiness and necessity for change which affects the individual.

6. THE FAMILY: The value placed on the unit of members of related bloodline including extended and ancestral parentage.



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These six clusters are futher divided into subclusters. Within each subcluster are the possible variations of choice for solving that problem. There is a composite total of 33 variations. It is these variations which reflect the value orientations a culture holds.

When dealing with values and beliefs one must keep in mind that value orientations are constructs, and are therefore abstract. They can be useful only when considered "as if" statements, i.e., Latin Americans behave "as if" believing that the family unit is more important than youth. One must also keep in mind the interrelatedness that exists in value orientations, a change in one area can affect one or more other areas. If we look at the following figure we can see the interrelatedness and interdependence that exist among the six value orientation counterparts which define or encompass the phenomenon known as culture. Nature, the Self, and Society are the three main clusters. Their intersections provide the other three clusters - the Supernatural, Human Nature, and the Family. The intersection of all six value clusters results in "Culture".

Culture, as previously defined, means the learned patterns of thinking, feeling, and behaving that make life meaningful for a particular group of human beings. Culture, however, is not static. It is constantly changing - no matter how slowly - as a result of individual and group experience and interactions with other individuals and groups because of the interrelatedness of the six value constructs. Change in the way one views Self may affect the way one sees society, or nature, and vice versa. Further, the way a culture views society or nature may affect the way the family and the supernatural are perceived in that culture, as well as how an individual may be perceived as having a separate but equal place in society.

Although the diagram on the previous page shows each construct as being equal, it must be remembered that each culture gives different degrees of importance to each cluster, stresses different variations within each cluster, and relates the clusters differently. In one culture, definition of Self may be an individual matter, fairly independent of others within the society or even the family. In another culture, however, a person may define Self largely in terms of his/her relationship to others and to society. Also, while some cultures may value age and experience, others may value youth and experiences. Finally, in some cultures, property may be seen as an extension of Self, while in others it may be communal with no personal claim to ownership.

For the purposes of the monograph series, differences in value orientations between cultures will be emphasized. It should be pointed out, however, that differences in value orientations also exist between subgroups within a culture. These within group differences may be greater than the differences that exist between cultures. For example, the differences that exist in cultural value orientations between urban and rural settings in the same nation may be greater than that found between cosmopolitan urban settings of different nations, particularly at the surface observations.

The Study of Cultures

The study of cultures and of cross-cultural values and beliefs can be facilitated by conceptualizing value orientations as a range of choices, of possible solutions for dealing with human problems common to all cultures. While this conceptualizing can provide the study of cultures a degree of objectivity it is important to remember that it is impossible for one to look at other cultures in a totally objective manner. Thus, anytime an individual from one culture looks at another culture, or devises a conceptual scheme with which to look at other cultures, that person's native culture will tend to influence her/his perceptions. With this fact in mind, it must be recognized that United States' cultural patterns have influenced, to a certain degree, the conceptual scheme. For example, the subcategories presented for Axiological Definitions utilize a tripart categorization. Such categorization is typical of United States society. Nevertheless, it is felt that through the use of The Conceptualization of Value Orientations, one may begin to understand the possible range of value orientations across cultures.

The Conceptualization of Value Orientations presented in this Monograph, and utilized as the basis for cross-cultural analysis, was developed over numerous years of serious study and of research conducted throughout the world. It is based on the work of Kluckholn and Strodtbeck (1961) and Condon and Yousef (1979) and incorporates the authors' interpretations and findings.

The Axiological Definitions, presented in the following section are part of A Conceptualization of Value Orientations. These definitions, as well as the conceptual scheme, have been researched and successfully presented by the authors in workshops and in cultural and cross-cultural training seminars in the United States, in the Caribbean, and in South America. Based on such success, it is felt that the Conceptualization of Value Orientations is useful and valid for the study of various cultures, and for a comparative analysis of contrasts and similarities between United States' society and other cultures.

In order to facilitate an understanding of the material presented in this Monograph, the reader is urged to read The Conceptualization of Cultural Values and the corresponding Axiological Definitions. The reader is also encouraged to frequently refer to the Axiological Definitions while reading the examples provided for the cultural group in this Monograph.

II. THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF VALUE ORIENTATIONS: AXIOLOGICAL DEFINITIONS

Value orientations are cultural principles and beliefs which humans have determined in attempting to give order and direction toward solving life's problems and evaluating the solutions involving the self, family, society, human nature, nature and the supernatural.

I. Self - the value placed on one's own being and worth as an individual in a particular age group and sex and activity pattern.

   A. Individualism - Interdependence - the value placed on how a person views his/her separateness.

      1. individualism - the sense that each person has of having a separate but equal place in society.

      2. individuality - a person's freedom to act differently within the limits set by the social structure.

      3. interdependence - the pattern where the self is largely determined by a person's current relationship to others in the social structure.

   B. Age - value placed on number of years which are considered the most influential over others.

      1. youth - a degree of maturity, vigor, idealism and freshness

      2. middle years - the period of life from about 40 to 60, combines experience and vigor.

      3. old age - past middle age, accumulation of experiences, wisdom, skills.

   C. Sex - the value placed on masculine/feminine role distinctions

      1. equality of the sexes - no particular role distinction; all persons are allowed similar development of potentials and skills with shared responsibilities.

      2. female superiority - authority of women in decision-making

      3. male superiority - authority of men in decision-making

D. Activity - the value of usefulness based on function.

1. doing - active emphasis on energy, accomplishments, creativity.

2. being-in-becoming - emphasis on what human is rather than what he/she can accomplish, self-actualization.

3. being - emphasis on spontaneous expression of what is conceived to be "given" in the human personality (impulses, desires, etc.)

II. The Family - the value placed on the unit of members of a group related by blood including extended and ancestral parentage.

A. Relational Orientations - the value placed on tendencies toward principles which define relationships.

1. individualistic - capable of being independent of particular groupings such as the family or peers.

2. collateral - the extended family which includes ancestry. There is a strong emotional link between members of a given family.

3. lineal - family historical inheritance respected.

B. Authority - the value placed on power of decision-making individual(s) of the family unit.

1. democratic - contributions of individual family members toward decisions involving the whole family unit.

2. authority-centered - decisions, activities, instructions for family are based on an external abstract faith (religion) or structure.

3. authoritarian - authoritarian parent (usually father) makes important decisions, "benevolent dictatorship".

C. Positional Role Behavior - value placed on expectations of particular performance of duties or behavior within the family unit.

1. open - no necessary expected role behavior appropriate to age and/or sex.

2. general - clear but general kinds of expectations for a person according to age, sex and position in family to exhibit certain types of conduct concomitant with preordained options; compromises and alternatives are possible.

3. specific - specific rights and obligations as determined by sex and age, set form of conduct and duties.

D. Mobility - value place on change and moveability.

1. high mobility - capable of any change toward self-improvement or betterment of oneself, develop individual potential.

2. phasic mobility - minimal, limited or periodic movement with the expectation of returning to place of origin.

3. low mobility - change considered detrimental to one's well-being.

III. Society - the value placed on the degree to which individuals feel responsible to participate in societal interactions.

A. Social Reciprocity - the value placed on the degree to which people are symbiotic in society.

1. independence - avoid commitments or obligations as threats to freedom.

2. symmetrical-obligatory - obligations to guarantee smooth interaction and sharing, relationships among equals as beneficial investments for all.

3. complementary-obligatory - relationship among unequals; subordination.

B. Group Membership - the value placed on the individuals participation in collective activities.

1. many groups, brief identification, subordination of group to individual

2. balance of no. 1 and 3 - individual exercises greater personal freedom in selecting group affiliation with a greater range of obligations and length of affiliation.

3. few groups, prolonged identification, subordination of the member to the group - individual is born into and remains part of social groups.

C. Intermediaries - the value placed on individuals who do or do not serve negotiators.

1. no intermediaries (directness) - the one-to-one approach, the personal relationship.

2. specialist intermediaries only - go-betweens providing a needed service only to facilitate communications between groups and/or individuals.

3. essential intermediaries - negotiators needed to maintain certain obligations toward and extracts comparable obligations from those served.

D. Formality - the value placed on the degree of ceremony, decorum, dignity, respect appropriate to function in society.

1. informality - unnecessary formal codes of conduct, titles and honorifics, speech; naturalness.

2. selective formality - formality used for certain interactions.

3. pervasive formality - formality seen as necessary for smooth and predictable interaction.

E. Property - the value placed on ownership of material goods.

1. private - considered an extension of self, representative of person's character and social status.

2. utilitarian - considered as having value only as it is practical, useful, used and necessary.

3. community - neither personal claims of ownership nor right through usage are relevant; property and natural resources considered as inherently possessed by all equally.

IV. Human Nature - the value placed on the degree of innate reasoning ability, goodness, search for happiness and necessity for change as it affects the individual.

A. Rationality - the value placed on the degree of necessity for reasoning ability.

1. rationality - reasonable behavior to adhere to criteria and standards subject to the judgment and appraisal of others seen as acceptable to other reasonable people.

2. intuitive - an innate possession of knowledge not subject to judgments or appraisals of others.

3. irrational - not conforming to norms of rationality; persons accredited with special powers of intuition or prescience, abstract or contradictory tracks of thought.

B. Good and Evil - value placed on the degree or the influence of good and evil.

1. good - what constitutes acceptable factors for continued harmony, growth and uninterruped productivity and well-being of all.

2. mixture of good and evil - concept that good and evil are dependent upon individual perception.

3. evil - concept that negative factors contribute to unwanted disequilibrium and disharmony of human behavior.

C. Happiness and Pleasure - the value placed on the degree of personal peace of mind and active enjoyment of life considered important.

1. happiness as goal - the goal toward physical and emotional satisfaction and stability.

2. inextricable bond of happiness and sadness - complacent acceptance of life's events as both happy and sad without* complaining, judging or retaliating, of adjusting one's feelings to circumstances.
*abandoned enjoyment

3. life is mostly sadness - conformist views which bear sadness as hope for happiness only after death.

D. Mutability - the value placed on the degree of change, growth considered acceptable for fulfillment.

1. change, growth, learning - active emphasis on change as means to betterment.

2. some change - acceptance of only those changes which are not counter-productive.

3. unchanging - change is regarded as threatening and unstable.

V. Nature - the value placed on the degree to which natural occurences determine human thought and activity.

A. Relationship of Man and Nature - the value placed on human control of natural forces.

1. man dominating nature - the view that man has power over natural forces and thereby controls his destiny and search for perfection.

2. man in harmony with nature - the combination of powers of man and the unpredictability of natural forces to produce an overall force to exist.

3. nature dominating man - humans fatalistically subjugated entirely to natural forces, an acceptance of human's incapacity to dominate nature.

B. Ways of Knowing Nature - the value placed on the interpretation of natural phenomena.

1. abstract - dissassociation from specific knowledge; hypothetical reasoning.

2. circle of induction-deduction - clearly understood, concrete evidence tests and modifies abstract theory or concept.

3. specific - empirical, scientific evidence considered necessary to prove a theory absolutely.

C. Structure of Nature - the value determined by the degree of testing or experimenting with nature.

1. mechanistic - cause and effect reasoning, analytical thought; testing encouraged.

2. spiritual - testing or questioning considered destructive, individual feels powerless under control of nature.

3. organic - any intrusion into the natural world detrimental.

D. Concept of Time - the value placed on the importance of the influence of future, past and present time in evaluating life's problems.

1. future - expectation of advancement or progressive development; today's activity consumed by planning for tomorrow.

2. past - conserve what was good in past rather than anticipate something better in future, value tradition and heritage.

3. present - importance of what is happening today.

VI. The Supernatural - the value placed on the degree of influence or control of a power greater than human power.

A. Relationship of Man and the Supernatural - the value placed on human involvement in determining destiny.

1. man as god - negates the existence of an external force which influences human destiny.

2. pantheism - a doctrine which equates God with the forces and laws of the universe.

3. man controlled by the supernatural - ultimate power in all acts is outside of human control.

B. Meaning of Life - the value placed on goals.

1. physical, material goals - material wealth, physical well-being and position attained more valued than spiritual or intellectual goals.

2. intellectual goals - the search for truth, guided by intellect rather than emotion of experience.

3. spiritual goals - search for favor and protection from all powerful God or gods, soul is considered immortal.

C. Providence - the value placed on the degree of acceptance of good in life.

1. good in life is unlimited - inherent good in nature.

2. balance of good and misfortune - presence and balance of both good and misfortune.

3. good in life is limited - good limited by human imagination and will.

D. Knowledge of the Cosmic Order - the value placed on the degree of acceptance of the organization of the universe.

1. order is comprehensible - predictable order and consistency throughout the universe are considered plausible.

2. faith and reason - predictable order is tempered by the acceptance that powers of reason exist beyond human.

3. mysterious and unknowable - unpredictability, unknowable, unexplainable by religious interpretation.

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III. INTRODUCTION TO THE VIETNAMESE CULTURAL MONOGRAPH

Any attempt to understand the value orientations of a people should begin with the historical events that forged the development of a nation and its inhabitants. While the nature of this report cannot do justice to the history of a nation as old and culturally rich as that of Vietnam, we shall attempt a brief summary in order to provide a broader perspective for understanding the motivations and desires that are the basis of Vietnamese behavior patterns.

Vietnam was originally a heterogenous mixture of a variety of racial and cultural types. These diverse groups succeeded, through the years, in retaining their own variations of language, religion, and customs, thus creating a cultural pattern that was unique to the nation of Vietnam. For almost 100 years the people inhabiting this area, known as Nam Viet, held out against the ever expanding Chinese Empire. Finally in 111 B.C. Nam Viet was conquered and colonized.

China ruled Vietnam for 100 years and during this time the Vietnamese people adopted many Chinese customs, religious practices (Buddhism and Confucianism) and governmental forms. Yet the Chinese failed to assimilate the people of this area who exhibited remarkable ethnic durability and tenacity in adhering to their own language and unique culture. After approximately 1000 years of Chinese occupation and Vietnamese resistance, the Vietnamese aristocrats, with the help of the peasants, were successful in overthrowing the Chinese ruling class. From this point, the nation enjoyed approximately 900 years of independence.

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In 1535 A.D. Europe took an interest in Vietnam and for the following 100 years Portugal, who was enjoying maritime greatness, maintained exclusive control of Vietnamese trade. Soon, many other European nations became involved. The Dutch, the English and the French all participated in Vietnamese commerce. By the beginning of the 16th century only France and Portugal remained as the only ambassadors of European influence. These merchants too might have left, but the Catholic Church still sought converts and with the English and Dutch gone, the French and Portuguese missionaries stepped up their proselytyzing efforts.

As missionaries, the French soon gained control in Vietnam and the society of foreign missions, founded in Paris in 1664, became the major force of Christian influence in Vietnam. The interest of merchants and missionaries were soon revitalized and the French began 300 years of influence over the Vietnamese people.

The value orientations of the Vietnamese must be seen then, as being influenced by three major events in their history. (1) 1000 years of Chinese dominance, (2) 900 years of independence (where they were able to select Chinese ideology and intermix it with their own beliefs, and (3) 300 years of European (mainly French/Catholic) control.

The value orientations used to demonstrate typical Vietnamese behavior have been selected from traditional and sometimes the intellectual ruling class because these appeared to be most indicative of Vietnamese culture as a whole.

IV. VALUE ORIENTATIONS OF THE VIETNAMESE

I Self

A. Societal Relationship of Self - Interdependence - The self has a deeply enmeshed interrelationship with the rest of his/her society.

Example: The teacher is seen as a spiritual, moral and academic father or mother. (Most higher grade teachers are male while many lower grade teachers are female.) The teacher is an unquestioned authority figure. She/he is addressed with a personal pronoun which denotes respect and familial relationship such as "Thua Thay" (Sir father) or "Thua Co" (Ma'am, Aunt or Mother). Reciprocally, the teacher calls the students such names as "con" (child), "anh" (elder brother), "chi" (elder sister). This relationship is firm and relatively unchanging.

B. Age - Old Age - There is a deep reverence for old age, the wisdom of many years and ancestry.

Example: When attending a banquet or a large social gathering, the elderly should be greeted first out of respect.

When a couple marries, the father prays to the ancestors at the altar that they might accept the marriage.

C. Sex - Male dominance

Example: There is a patrilineal kinship system among the Vietnamese.

When a woman marries she honors her husband's ancestors and becomes a part of his lineage. After death, it is in his family rather than her own that her soul is venerated. (Smith, 1967, p. 106)

C. Activity - Doing

Example: From comment made concerning a recent fishing controversy in N.W. Florida, "The Vietnamese work so damn hard. They work day and night, Saturday and Sunday. They never stop." Today about 100 Vietnamese boats sail out of Pensacola. Their boats make up about 20 percent of the region's fleet. "Almost every day, their crew members are painting the vessels, rebuilding their cabins and scraping their hulls. Women and children sit on the decks, sewing the heavy green mesh of the nets." (The Miami Herald, Sunday, May 22, 1983)

II. The Family

A. Relational Orientations - lineal

Example #1: Because of the deep roots in Confucianism and Buddhism, ancestors are highly revered and worshipped. Since the heads of families and chiefs of clans are the initiators and main celebrants in ancestor worship ceremonies, it is very important for families to have sons. A family that does not have sons to continue this ancestor veneration is thought to have received the worst fate dealt to mankind. Families will often adopt a son and leave him money to continue the veneration ceremonies. A family that has no son to continue this process is thought to have "disappeared" forever. (Crawford, 1966, pp. 69-70)

Example #2: Vu, the son of a Vietnamese refugee says that he is aware of the family's Vietnamese culture but feels "perfectly American".

What he expects of himself and what is expected of him, however is quite traditional. "As the oldest son I must marry to carry on the family name. I must set an example for my brother...I would plan my life to achieve that goal and carry out the family responsibility." (The Miami Herald, Section D, Friday, May 13, 1983)

B. Authority - Authoritarian

Example #1: In the modern family decisions such as the choice of occupation or marital partner for the offspring are generally made by the head of the individual household, with the concurrence of the wife and perhaps the grandparents. Where decisions are made in this manner, unquestioned obedience on the part of the younger generation is demanded and received.

Throughout her marriage, a woman is expected to be dutiful and respectful toward both her husband and his parents. In some areas when a young bride is brought home by her new husband, the mother-in-law places a brazier containing burning coals at the threshold, the bride being expected to step over, rather than walk around it, as a demonstration of submissiveness. (Smith, 1967, pp. 114-115).

Example #2: A Husband's Advice

folk poem - Author unknown

Our home is just one room,
half kitchen, half bedroom
I leave it in your care

While I go abroad to trade
Take care of Mother
   so I can travel far
Be respectful, she's old
Don't grumble or people will wag
   their tongues
In good and bad times keep your
   spirits up, your weight down
Stay alert
   remember everything
   so I may trade in all tranquility
(Bich, 1975, p. 54)

C. Positional Role Behavior - Specific

The specific rights and obligations of family members are clearly outlined.

Example #1: The unmarried females of a traditional family have their marriages arranged by their families. The bridegroom's family pays the dowry to the girl's family. This folk poem depicts the type of dilemma this custom may have caused from time to time.

The Arranged Marriage
folk poem Ca Dao - Author unknown

Mother wanted the dowry of rice,
   huge sow, and Canh-Hung coins,

but I asked her to refuse
She raved and ranted and made
the match
So now one is low; the other
high
Like unmatched chopsticks, never
equal
(Balaban, 1930, p. 61)

Example #2: As reported by a Vietnamese Refugee - Premarital sex, as well as divorce are definite no-noes in Vietnamese culture. Vietnamese are very reserved, both sexes. "The outspoken, dynamic American society sometimes creates unease, particularly in the oriental female." (The Miami Herald, Section D., Friday, May 13, 1983)

D. Mobility - Low Mobility, Status

Little to no geographical movement. The lineal family relationship is mainly responsible for the low mobility of the people. It is essential to stay in one place if one is going to be a participating member of a large extended family or clan. A man is expected to maintain the graves of his forebears, to offer sacrifices at the family altar and celebrate ancestral feast days. "One of the chief dreads of the Vietnamese peasant is that his family will disintegrate, leave its ancestral home and fail to carry out its duty to the ancestors. It is for this reason that he tries to remain near the graves of his forebears, even in military operational areas, and will leave only under extreme duress." (Smith, 1967, pp. 192-193).

III Society

A. Social Reciprocity - Complementary - Obligatory

Example: The Vietnamese peasant enjoys being a good host and would feel hurt if the guest shows any signs of knowing that the family may have borrowed or sold something of value in order to entertain them in the grandest fashion. The guest is best advised to pretend that she/he knows nothing of this, not to offer to share costs, and when reciprocating to do so in a lavish manner. (Crawford, 1966, p. 114).

Example #2: "Their peers admire them a great deal. All four of them have been helpful to me as a teacher. If a student didn't understand something and I was busy, they would take the time to sit down and explain how to work out a chemistry problem. They are not just interested in their own accomplishments." (The Miami Herald, Section D., Friday, May 13, 1983)

B. Group Membership

Few groups, prolonged identification, subordination of the member to the group. While this category is supposed to involve social groups outside of the family, there are few groups to which the Vietnamese traditionally belong which no not include the clan or extended family. Those groups either socially or professionally to which they do belong outside the family are usually few and of prolonged identification. (Smith, 1967)

C. Intermediaries - Essential Intermediaries

Example: The value set on harmony in interpersonal relationships is expressed in everyday situations through the use of delicacy, tact, politeness and gentleness in dealing with others. "When an arrangement is to be made between two individuals or interested groups, for example, it is customary to hire an intermediary to conduct the negotiations, so as to minimize the possibilities for friction. An intermediary is usually employed, for instance, when a marriage is to be arranged between a potential bride and bridegroom who are unknown to one another." The use of the intermediary provides an avoidance of face-to-face confrontation until both parts have agreed to the contract. Either possible partner, if she/he so desires, can then ease out of the situation gracefully with no offense to the other. (Smith, 1967, p. 194).

D. Formality - Pervasive Formality

Avoidance of risks of awkward or embarrassing encounters by consistent use of formality. An important feature of the Vietnamese language which illustrates the formality which is existent in almost every aspect of life, is the system of personal pronouns and personal "classifiers" indicating status relationships. "Age, education, personal achievement and official rank command respect, and this respect is displayed in speech as well as in conduct. Many subtleties and nuances are reflected in the choice of terms, and the use of the wrong form can cause offense." (Smith, 1967, pp. 72-73).

E. Property

On the continuum between Utilitarian and Community. For the Vietnamese farmers, (of which there are many in the south) land is only valuable for its usefulness. However, some community-land ownership is appropriate for the purpose of ancestor worship. The leader or chief of a clan is often given the use (or sometimes ownership) of land in order to finance ancestral ceremonies.

IV. Human Nature

A. Rationality

The vietnamese culture seems to fall into three of these categories depending upon social class.

1. The upper to middle class seems to believe that man is Rational, therefore he can reason and learn. Education is very important to this group.
2. The working class, who often falls into the Intuitive category, views human nature such that man can make judgements from within himself without benefit of a learned set of standards.
3. Irrational - The peasant, rural or lower class individuals in this society may or may not realistically fall in this category. Because of ancient religious and superstitious beliefs this group is often viewed by the ruling classes as unable to think or reason. Therefore, it is believed, they can only do what they are told to do.

B. Good and Evil

Again, as with part A, this society falls along all portions of the continuum depending upon the individual's particular religious or superstitious beliefs.

C. Happiness, Pleasure

Vietnamese society falls somewhere on the continuum between Inextricable Bond of Happiness and Sadness and Life is mostly Sadness. Again because of varying religious and superstitious beliefs, this varies among the people. The poor peasant, for example, may see his life as mostly sadness because of the often hard and austere conditions under which he lives. On the other hand, some of the middle to upper class people see their lives as containing both happiness and sadness.

D. Mutability - Unchanging

For the traditional vietnamese family, the lineal family relationship renders mutability relatively static. This Ca Dao poem reflects the unchangeability of life from one generation to another.

Lullaby

Folk "Ca Dao" Poem

Little one, go to sleep. Sleep soundly.
Mother's gone to market; father ploughs
the far field.

Our parents toil for our meals,
rice and clothing, making the land
yield a good home
Grow up, study hard, little one;
tend to our native place, mountains
and rivers.
Become worthy of the Lac-Hong race.
Hopes met, our parents' faces will
widen in smiles.
(Balaban, 1975, p. 35)

V. Nature

A. Relationship of Man & Nature

This orientation falls on the continuum between Man in harmony with Nature and Nature dominating man. This is thought to be true because the Vietnamese respect the concept of being in harmony with nature while at the same time the peasant farmer is especially aware of the great control which nature has over his life. In the poem which follows the intricate balance between man's harmonious existence with nature and its control over his/her life is illustrated.

Leaving the Village
Folk "Ca Dao" Poem

Even when cross planks are nailed down
bamboo bridges are shakily unsound.

Hard going
Hard going, so push back
to catch crab,
to the river for fish, to our sandy
patch for melons.

B. Ways of Knowing Nature

The peasant way to know nature is closest to specific, while the intellectual ruling class knows nature as more of a circle of induction-deduction.

C. Structure of Nature

The peasant farmer views nature as being Spiritual. He sees nature as a God-given aspect of his/her life. She/he may farm it, fish and hunt from it, but only discriminately and with care. The peasant farmer does not tamper with or destroy the intricate equilibrium of nature.

D. Concept of time - Past

The lineal orientation of family renders this society a very slowly changing one so that time orientations still remain, for the most part, in the past. "Cultist practices in the villages are slow to change and adapt to modern times. But even this ever-increasingly urbanized society retains certain of the characteristics and patterns that have kept the foundations of the rural society intact." (Weiss, 1970, pp. 75-76)

VI. The Supernatural

A. Relationship of Man and the Supernatural

The Vietnamese orientation here lies between the concepts of Pantheism and Man Controlled by the Supernatural. The following folk tale can be taken as an illustration of this concept. (Tet is the New Year).

The Legend of the Narcissus

Like the apricot blossom, the narcissus plays an important role at Tet. It is considered a good omen if they bloom on New Year's Day, so great care is given to their cultivation, with the use of the sugar water, pruning, and other techniques, to ensure their blooming at that time.

A rich old man had three sons. When he felt he was about to die, he called in his children and said that he wished his fortune to be divided equally among them. The children promised to respect his will and the old man died happy.

He had hardly been buried when the two elder sons took most of the youngest one's share. Only a poor plot of good-for-nothing-land was given to him.

The unfortunate younger son was sadly looking at his inheritance when he saw a fairy appear. "Stop crying," she said. "There is a treasure hidden beneath your plot of land and

your brothers don't know it." She explained that the sprout of a most valuable flower was hidden under the soil.

The boy was astonished and the fairy said, "You'll get rich with these flowers; each spring will see them bloom in your garden and you can sell them at a good price."

The boy was filled wtih gratitude and prostrated himself on the ground to express his thanks, but the fairy had disappeared.

The very next spring, the land was covered with a fragrant whiteness. In memory of the fairy who protected him, he called the flower Thuy Tien (water fairy). Everyone who saw it loved its beauty and delicate perfume. The lords and the rich began to contend with one another to buy them and offered fabuluous prices for the floral wonder.

In just a few years, the lucky fellow accumulated an immense fortune from the sale of the narcissus. As he became richer than his stingy brothers who tried to rob him, the narcissus became a symbol of success and prosperity. This is why it is used at Tet.
(Crawford, 1966, p. 220)

B. Meaning of Life

The dicotomy of the elite and the peasant classes places this value

orientation in the Intellectual category for the ruling upper classes and in the category of Spiritual Goals for the peasant population. Confucianism, Buddhism and Catholicism are the three largest philosophical and spiritual beliefs in Vietnam.

C. Providence

Here again the orientation is a midpoint between Balance of Good and Misfortune and Good in Life is limited. The following folk tale can be seen to illustrate these two concepts.

The Betel and the Areca Tree

This legend explains why the betel nut is chewed by newlywed couples and at ceremonies and anniversaries.

During the reign of Hung-Vuong III, there was a mandarin by the name of Cao. He had two good-looking sons who resembled each other so much that many people thought they were twins. The two boys, Tan and Lang, were most fond of each other.

Tan and Lang's father and mother died, leaving them without any money. After a series of misfortunes, the boys decided they would try to find work. Guided by fate, the first place they went to was the home of a good friend of their father, Magistrate Luu. Luu welcomed the boys cordially and offered them a place in his stately mansion.

Luu accepted the boys as his own sons for he had never had a son, and this is considered to be a terrible fate in Vietnam. He did have a beautiful daughter, however, who was "as fair as a white lotus and as fresh as a spring rose." The Magistrate wanted to tighten the bonds of affection and friendship between the boys and his family, so he decided to give his daughter in marriage to one of the boys.

Both of the boys were naturally attracted by the pretty maiden with her beautiful appearance and graceful manners and each of them loved her secretly. However, each of the boys had a generous heart and each one insisted that his beloved brother have the honor of marrying the Magistrate's lovely daughter.

The father knew the boys could never come to an agreement and because they looked like twins, he never had really known which brother was the eldest. He prepared a little trick to find out who was the elder brother, because he would offer his daughter to him. The eldest son in a family receives priority over the others, according to custom.

Luu ordered that a fine dinner be served to the brothers but told the servants that they were to put only one pair of chopsticks on the tables. The boys were seated and without hesitation, Lang picked up the chopsticks and respectfully handed them to Tan. Tan took them in a most natural manner as any

elder brother would do. Therefore, Magistrate Luu chose Tan as the bridegroom.

Tan was now the happiest man in all of Vietnam. He loved his bride so passionately that he spent most of his time making up love poems to describe his feelings. He completely neglected his brother Lang, who seemed to have disappeared from his thoughts.

After the wedding of his brother to the fair maiden, Lang overcame his secret love for her and accepted his lot, for he wanted only joy and happiness for his beloved older brother.

After awhile, however, Lang realized that his brother was very cold and indifferent to him. Lang sat alone in his room waiting for some sign of care or friendship from his brother, but nothing happened.

Poor Lang! To him, this was the worst possible fate. His beloved brother no longer cared for him and he had also lost the love of his dreams. In wild sorrow, he ran away from his home, for he could stand the sadness no longer. He ran and ran, passing leafy forests, until he reached the dark blue sea. Night came and Lang fell exhausted on the ground, hungry and thirsty. His head was as hot as fire. He cried and cried until he died and was turned immediately into a white chalky rock.

Tan discovered that Lang had stolen away and he felt extremely sorry and ashamed for his selfishness toward the brother he loved. Full of regrets and worries, he set out to look for Lang.

He went along the same way that his brother had gone and arrived at the same dark blue sea. He, too, was exhausted and sat down by the white rock and began to weep. He wept and wept until he died and then he was turned into a tree with a straight stem and green palms. It was the areca tree.

The lovely maiden missed her husband, Tan, so much that she set off one day to look for him. She went along the same way as the brothers and reached the sea and lay down exhausted at the foot of the tall areca tree. Tears of despair rolled down her cheeks, and she cried sorrowfully until she died. She was turned into a creeping plant - the betel - which twined round the lofty column of the areca tree.

The peasants who lived near this place all had a dream about the three people and built a temple in commemoration of the fraternal and conjugal love of the three.

Years later, King Hung-Vuong III happened to be in that place and he was puzzled by the rock, the tree, and the plant, all of which he had never seen before.

When he heard the whole story, he said, "If these are such

devoted brothers and faithful husband and wife, let us mix up the three things together to see the result.

They burned the rock which became soft and white, and they wrapped a little of it in a betel leaf, cut a piece of areca nut and squeezed them all together. A sort of red liquid, like blood, ran out of the mixture.

The king thought a few minutes and said, "This is the true symbol of conjugal and fraternal love. Let the tree and the plant be grown everywhere in commemoration of this beautiful but sad story."

Brothers and sisters, and especially newlyweds, began to chew betel in order to maintain conjugal love. The habit spread very quickly and now a great number of people chew betel at all meetings to "maintain mutual affection."

(Adopted from a translation by Mrs. Barh Lau)

(Crawford, 1966, pp. 221-225)

D. Knowledge of the Cosmic Order

For the peasant, the cosmic order is Mysterious and Unknowable. Some of the poems and folk tales already cited well illustrate this point.

V. APPENDIX : GENERAL OUTLINE OF U.S. VALUE ORIENTATIONS

I. Self
   A. Societal Relationship of Self
      1. Individualism
   B. Age
      1. Youth
   C. Sex
      3. Male dominant (although the ideal is male-female equality)
   D. Activity
      1. Doing

II. The Family
   A. Relational orientations
      1. Individualistic orientation
   B. Authority
      1. Democratic
   C. Positional Role Behavior
      1. Open
   D. Mobility
      1. High mobility

III. Society
   A. Social Reciprocity
      1. Independence
   B. Group membership
      1. Super affiliate
   C. Intermediaries
      1. Directness (no intermediaries)
   D. Formality
      1. Informal
   E. Property
      1. Private Property

IV. Human Nature
   A. Rationality
      1. Rational

B. Good and Evil

3. Evil (this is the traditional Puritan emphasis)

1. Good (this is reflected in a Carl Rogers approach to education)

These two belief systems have constantly been at odds, especially in the educational system.

C. Happiness and Pleasure

1. Happiness as a goal

D. Mutability

1. Change, growth, and learning

V. Nature

A. Relationship of man and nature

1. Man dominating nature

B. Ways of Knowing Nature

2. Circle of induction and deduction

C. Structure of Nature

1. Mechanistic

D. Concept of Time

1. Future

VI. Supernatural

A. Relationship of Man and the Supernatural

1. Man as God (or almost equal with)

B. Meaning of life

1. Physical and material goals

C. Providence

1. Good in life is unlimited

D. Knowledge of the Cosmic Order

1. Order is comprehensible

VI. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A collection of Vietnamese poetry translated into English by John Balaban. The work consists of both the Vietnamese poetry and its English translation. Ca Dao is a type of poetry which is often sung and has its basis in folk tales.

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A guide for classroom teachers concerning cultural values and customs of Vietnamese students. The material is designed to bridge the language and cultural barrier, and to help the refugees to take their place as new members of American society.

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